

2 July 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: SA/AD/CR

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendment of the U.S. Postal  
Rate Bill

1. The proposed amendment to the U.S. Postal rate bill would make illegal use of U.S. mail channels for "the receipt, handling, transport, or delivery . . . of mail matter determined by the Attorney General to be Communist political propaganda." It is probable that most literature originating in Communist countries contains political propaganda. Consequently, passage of the proposed amendment would result in almost total denial of Sino-Soviet Bloc publications to USIB agencies and other U.S. Government Departments.

2. Acquisitions Branch of the CIA Library, which administers the Foreign Publications Procurement program through U. S. Department of State channels, is the major receiving point for Sino-Soviet Bloc open literature in the U.S. Government. This material is sent from overseas either by sea or air pouch via regular mail channels and does not carry diplomatic immunity. Approximately 340,000 pieces a year are pouched from Moscow alone, and an estimated total of 1,100,000 pieces of Communist-originated material is received annually through the mail by Acquisitions Branch. Passage of the proposed amendment would deal a death blow to the Foreign Publications Procurement program.

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5. One must remember the monolithic structure of Communist society in order to understand that U.S. denial of the use of its mails for Communist publications would not substantially hinder the Communist effort. The only people adversely affected would be U.S. students, scholars, and government officials who are required to make policy decisions and must use Communist publications as background in the evaluation process. The proposed denial is, in effect, similar to denying the preacher the use of his Bible.

6. Passage of the amendment would eliminate almost every channel presently used by Acquisitions Branch for the procurement of Communist literature. Establishment of comprehensive and effective procurement channels which would not use regular mail is well-nigh impossible. We would be forced to turn to classified covert procurement channels, already overburdened, to continue to procure this type of material. It is axiomatic that intelligence must have the publications of foreign nations in order to produce effective evaluations. Denial of this material to the USIB agencies would dangerously cripple the U.S. intelligence effort.

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CIA Librarian